

TELEGRAM

INCOMING

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

POL 23-8

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Classification

Control: SAO PAULO 699

Recd: JULY 24, 1970

ACTION

POL

INFO

CHRON

RF-2

R 232015Z JUL 70

FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

TO RUESUA/AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO

RUESUZ/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

ZEN/AMCONSUL RECIFE

ZEN/AMCONSUL PORTO ALEGRE

ZEN/AMCONSUL BELEM

ZEN/AMCONSUL SALVADOR

BT

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ACTION COPY

ACTION TAKEN Sc

Declassified

Authority: 43265 By:

Amanda Weimer Date:

05-14-2015

SUBJECT: SAO PAULO DEATH SQUAD PROVOKES PUBLIC CONTROVERSY

1. ON AGAIN, OFF AGAIN ACTIVITIES OF SAO PAULO "ESQUADRAO DA MORTE" (DEATH SQUAD) REACHED NEW HEIGHTS DURING PAST WEEK, RESULTING IN DEATH ELEVEN CRIMINALS, STRONG PUBLIC AND OFFICIAL CONDEMNATION AND CALL FOR AUTHORITIES TO ADOPT STIFF MEASURES AGAINST "ESQUADRAO."

2. PRESENT FLARE-UP OF "ESQUADRAO" ASSASSINATIONS ATTRIBUTED BY MOST OBSERVERS TO JULY 17 DEATH POLICE INVESTIGATOR AGOSTINHO GONCALVES DE CARVALHO DURING GUN BATTLE WITH THIEVES.

3. AT INVESTIGATOR'S INTERNMENT NEXT DAY, POLICE COLLEAGUES FIRED VOLLEY INTO AIR. THIS ACT INTERPRETED BY LOCAL PRESS AS GESTURE ASSURING VENGEANCE, ALTHOUGH POLICE SPOKESMAN DISMISSED IT AS "TRADITIONAL FAREWELL." LATER THAT EVENING, VOICE IDENTIFYING SELF AS "LIRIO BRANCO," PUBLICIST FOR "ESQUADRAO," TELEPHONED POLICE REPORTERS STATING THAT "MARGINAIS" (CRIMINALS) WOULD BE ELIMINATED IN RETRIBUTION CARVALHO'S DEATH. VOICE SAID FOUR "PIGS" ALREADY DEAD. BODIES SUBSEQUENTLY FOUND AT LOCATION INDICATED BY "LIRIO BRANCO." OVER WEEKEND SIX OTHER "MARGINAIS" FOUND DEAD FOR WHICH "ESQUADRAO" CLAIMED CREDIT. PRESS GAVE PROMINENT PLAY TO DEVELOPMENTS.

4. CULMINATION REACHED JULY 21 WHEN LARGE POLICE BAND CLOSED IN ON ANJUVAN NUNES, ALIAS "GURI," SOUGHT BY POLICE AS CARVALHO'S

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MURDERER. PRESS REPORTED "GURI'S" BODY FOUND WITH 150 SLUGS IN IT. GETULIO PRADO, CHIEF OF DRAGNET, CLAIMED "GURI" FIRED FIRST AND WAS KILLED RESISTING ARREST.

5. FOLLOWING ON HEELS THESE EVENTS, NELSON FONSECA, JUDGE WITH JUDICIAL POLICE, RELEASED WITH FANFARE AT PRESS CONFERENCE JULY 22 LETTER TO PRESIDENT OF SAO PAULO STATE COURT OF JUSTICE BLASTING "STRANGE SILENCE AND INACTION OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY." DECLARING SUCH DERELICTION OF DUTY ENCOURAGED MORE CRIMES WITH IMPUNITY, LETTER WARNED INACTION COULD LEAD ENTIRE SOCIAL ORDER TO CHAOS AND CONTRASTED THESE EVENTS WITH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S CLAIM TO WORLD THAT VIOLENCE NON-EXISTENT IN BRAZIL. CALLED FOR COURT TO REQUEST URGENTLY EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF STATE GOVERNMENT TAKE MEASURES, INCLUDING FEDERAL INTERVENTION IF REQUIRED, TO END CRIMES. COMMENTING TO PRESS CORPS, FONSECA STATED POLICE LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR "MARGINAIS" MURDERS AND REFUTED POLICE CLAIMS THAT THEY RESULT OF UNDERWORLD INTERNECINE WARS. STATED CATEGORICALLY: "WE HAVE ITEMS PROVING MEMBERS "ESQUADRAO" FROM POLICE ITSELF." PRESIDENT OF COURT, GARCIA DE ALMEIDA, IN CAUTIOUS PUBLIC STATEMENT IMPLIED GENERAL ENDORSEMENT FONSECA'S POSITION AND DECLARED HIS INTENT TO TRANSMIT LETTER TO PRESIDENT MEDICI, MIN JUSTICE, PRESIDENT NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL AND STATE GOVERNOR, SECRETARY PUBLIC SAFETY, AND ATTORNEY GENERAL. SAO PAULO LAWYER'S ASSOC. ISSUED CAREFULLY WORDED STATEMENT TO GOVERNOR SODRE CALLING FOR CLARIFICATION OF SITUATION AND MEASURES AGAINST "ESQUADRAO."

6. COMMENT: ESQUADRAO SUMMARY JUSTICE IN PART REFLECTS ITS MEMBERS' LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN LEGAL SYSTEM, I.E., THEIR DOUBT COURTS WILL IMPOSE DUE PENALTIES AGAINST CRIMINALS. SINCE "ESQUADRAO" ACTIVITIES. CONGEN HAS NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE BUT GENERAL CONSENSUS IS THAT "ESQUADRAO" CONSISTS OF SOME LOW-LEVEL POLICE PERSONNEL WITH AT LEAST TACIT CONSENT OF HIGHER AUTHORITIES.

7. RASH OF SUMMARY "MARGINAIS" EXECUTIONS" THIS PAST WEEK AND ATTENDANT PUBLICITY PROBABLY PROMPTED THOSE IN JUDICIAL SYSTEM TO SPEAK OUT AT LAST AGAINST WHAT THEY CONSIDER SERIOUS THREAT TO PUBLIC ORDER AND LEGAL PROCEDURES. ON OTHER HAND, THESE SAME PERSONS HAVE REMAINED SILENT IN PAST WHEN

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FACED WITH EVEN GREATER INFRINGEMENTS PREROGATIVES OF JUDICIAL
BRANCH. IF OUTCRY MEANT TO UNDERMINE "HARD-LINER" SECRETARY
PUBLIC SAFETY. COL. CUNHA E MELO. IT WILL BE ABORTIVE. [REDACTED]

EO50x1

[REDACTED] THE SECRETARY IS VERY MUCH "MILITARY'S MAN" AND
PLACED IN OFFICE LAST MARCH FOR THIS REASON. ALSO PLAUSIBLE
IS THAT FONSECA, IN PRESENT POSITION SLIGHTLY OVER ONE MONTH,
HOPES USE " ESQUADRAO" ISSUE TO ADVANCE HIS OWN CAREER.

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